

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0713

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BERLIN 5590

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, UR, UK, FR, GE, NATO

SUBJECT: V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS

REF: A) BERLIN 5532 B) BERLIN 5565 C) STATE 57493

SUMMARY:

FRG, BRITISH AND FRENCH REPRESENTATIVES HERE HAVE RECEIVED NEW INSTRUCTIONS GOVERNING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS IN EAST BERLIN. (FOR BACKGROUND SEE REFS A AND B) GAUS, OF THE FRG, WILL ATTEND THE MAIN EVENTS. BECAUSE OF THIS DECISION, AND THE PRECEDENT OF UK ATTENDANCE DURING THE 1974 CELEBRATIONS, THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR HAS RECEIVED "FULL DISCRETION" TO PARTICIPATE IN EVENTS THIS YEAR, AND PLANS TO DO SO. THE FRENCH ARE SEEKING SIMILAR DISCRETION, BASED ON FRG INTENTIONS AND THEIR OWN PRECEDENT OF ATTENDANCE LAST YEAR, ALTHOUGH PARIS HAS NOT YET ALTERED ITS VIEWS TO THE EXTENT THAT LONDON HAS.

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WE THEREFORE NEED TO RE-EXAMINE OUR OWN POSITION IN

LIGHT OF THE OVERALL CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATING IN SUCH CELEBRATIONS THAT ARE SET FORTH IN REF C: I.E., THE NEED FOR A WAY THAT WILL ENSURE RECOGNITION OF OUR CONTRIBUTION IN THE WAR, AVOID OFFENSE TO THE FRG, PROVIDE A MEANS FOR COORDINATING OUR ACTIVITIES WITH THE ALLIES, AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH EACH COUNTRY INVOLVED. THE CENTRAL NEW DEVELOPMENT IS THE FRG DECISION TO TAKE FULL PART IN THESE CEREMONIES. SUBJECT TO THE VIEWS OF AMBASSADOR COOPER, NOW IN WASHINGTON ON CONSULTATION, THE EMBASSY REQUESTS AUTHORIZATION TO ATTEND THESE EVENTS AT ITS DISCRETION. WE WILL, OF COURSE, CONTINUE TO KEEP THE DEPARTMENT AND ADDRESSEES INFORMED.

THE GDR MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS SENT DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS A NOTE INDICATING THE EVENTS BEING PLANNED, AND REQUESTING REPLIES CONCERNING ATTENDANCE BY NOON ON MONDAY, APRIL 28. END SUMMARY:

1. THE THREE EVENTS SCHEDULED TO COMMEMORATE THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF V-E DAY IN EAST BERLIN ARE DESCRIBED IN A GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY NOTE AS (1) A CEREMONY AT THE OPERA HOUSE (FESTVERANSTALTUNG) ON MAY 7; (2) A WREATH LAYING AT TREPTOW SPONSORED BY THE GDR YOUTH MOVEMENT (FDJ) ALSO ON MAY 7; AND (3) A WREATH LAYING AT TREPTOW HONORING SOVIET WAR HEROES ON MAY 8. (PRESUMABLY THERE WILL ALSO BE A RECEPTION OFFERED AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY ON MAY 7 OR 8.)

FRG VIEWS

2. THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE IN BONN HAS GIVEN FRG REPRESENTATIVE GAUS DISCRETION TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH EVENTS COMMEMORATING V-E DAY AS HE BELIEVES APPROPRIATE, SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING THOSE UNDER GDR SPONSORSHIP. GAUS'S DEPUTY, BRAEUTIGAM, INFORMS US THAT THIS MATTER WAS "EASY TO DECIDE" AND THAT THE FRG ACTED ON THE BASIS OF CONDITIONS" THAT ARE SPECIAL IN EAST BERLIN." BRAEUTIGAM STATES THAT GAUS WILL ATTEND ALL OF THE OCCASIONS MENTIONED ABOVE, EXCEPT FOR THE WREATH LAYING SPONSORED BY THE FDJ ON MAY 7. BRAEUTIGAM HOPES THAT
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THE WESTERN ALLIES WILL BE SIMILARLY REPRESENTED AT V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS IN EAST BERLIN. (CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FRENCH, BRITISH AND FRG REPRESENTATIVES HERE HAVE PRODUCED AGREEMENT THAT IT IS NOT NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE TO ATTEND THE FDJ EVENT.)

3. BRAEUTIGAM DOES NOT EXPECT HONECKER OR OTHER GDR SPEAKERS AT THE MAY 7 OPERA HOUSE CEREMONIES TO MAKE

INTOLERABLY DISPARAGING REMARKS ABOUT THE FRG. SHOULD THIS SITUATION OCCUR, HOWEVER, GAUS DOES NOT PLAN TO LEAVE THE MEETING, BUT INSTEAD WOULD MAKE A STATEMENT AFTERWARDS ON WEST GERMAN TELEVISION, WHICH IS SEEN THROUGHOUT MOST OF THE GDR, SETTING FORTH HIS OBJECTIONS TO WHATEVER HAPPENED. THE POTENTIALLY AWKWARD SITUATION OF A WALK-OUT BY GAUS THUS SEEMS TO BE ELIMINATED. (IN A SOMEWHAT CURIOUS MOVE OF ITS OWN, THE FRG MISSION HERE WILL PLACE A WREATH IN A CEMETERY FOR GERMAN SOLDIERS OF WORLD WAR II LOCATED IN THE GDR, POSSIBLY AT HALBE WHICH REPORTEDLY HAS 20,000 GRAVES, THE SAME DAY AS THE WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AT TREPTOW IN EAST BERLIN.)

BRITISH VIEWS

4. NEW INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED BY THE BRITISH ARE CLEAR, AND INDICATE THAT CONFORMITY WITH FRG ATTENDANCE IS DESIRABLE. THESE INSTRUCTIONS GIVE THE BRITISH "FULL DISCRETION" TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY EVENTS IN EAST BERLIN THE EMBASSY DEEMS APPROPRIATE, INCLUDING THOSE UNDER GDR SPONSORSHIP. THE BRITISH CHARGE TELLS US THAT HIS AMBASSADOR PLANS TO ATTEND ALL EVENTS IN PARAGRAPH 1 ABOVE (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE FDJ WREATH LAYING AS NOTED) AND THAT AMBASSADOR KEEBLE WOULD ALSO ATTEND A RECEPTION AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY. THIS REPEATS THE PATTERN OF BRITISH PARTICIPATION IN V-E DAY COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS LAST YEAR.

FRENCH VIEWS

5. NEW INSTRUCTION OUT OF PARIS ARE NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. THESE DIRECT THE FRENCH EMBASSY TO REFRAIN FROM
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ATTENDING EVENTS COMMEMORATING V-E DAY THAT ARE SPONSORED BY THE GDR REGIME. AS THE FRENCH HERE INTERPRET THEIR INSTRUCTIONS, THIS WOULD EXCLUDE THEIR ATTENDANCE AT ALL EVENTS MENTIONED IN THE MFA DIPLOMATIC NOTE. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR COULD, HOWEVER, ATTEND A RECEPTION AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY WHICH HE WOULD PLAN TO DO. THE FRENCH POSITION FOCUSSES ON THEIR OBJECTION TO THE GDR REGIME'S BEHAVING AS IF IT WERE ONE OF THE WORLD WAR II ALLIES, REPRESENTING ITSELF AS AN INNOCENT VICTIM OF FACISM PURGED BY THE POTSDAM AGREEMENTS OF ANY VESTIGES OF NAZISM. THE FRENCH EMBASSY VIEW IS THAT IT IS DESIRABLE TO OBTAIN THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE BRITISH WITH REGARD TO THESE EVENTS, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF FRG INTENTIONS. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDING TO PARIS THAT SUCH FLEXIBILITY BE PROVIDED. THE BRITISH, ON THEIR

PART, PLAN TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT FRENCH POSITION WITH THE QUAI DIRECTLY, IN ORDER TO TRY TO OBTAIN A JOINT POSITON BASED UPON LAST YEAR'S ATTENDANCE, BY BOTH THE FRENCH AND BRITISH EMBASSIES.

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THE US POSITION

6. IN MY TALKS WITH THE FRENCH, BRITISH AND FRG REPRESENTATIVES, I HAVE SAID THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS THAT RULE OUT ACTIVE US PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS ON "GERMAN TERRITORY" (STATE 57493). IN LIGHT OF INFORMATION THAT HAS BECOME AVAILABLE SINCE THIS POSITION WAS FORMULATED, HOWEVER, IT IS NECESSARY TO REVIEW THE MATTER. PRESENT INSTRUCTIONS COULD PLACE US IN A UNIQUE POSITION IN EAST BERLIN, ESPECIALLY IF THE FRENCH EMBASSY OBTAINS THE FLEXIBILITY IT SEEKS. THE CRITERIA SET FORTH IN PARA 2 OF REF (C) WERE MEANT TO APPLY OUTSIDE OF "GERMAN TERRITORY", BUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS GIVE THEM RELEVANCE TO THE GDR. AT THE HEART OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS IS THE DESIRE TO AVOID OFFENSE TO THE FRG. THE

FRG, HOWEVER, HAS DECIDED TO TAKE WHATEVER RISKS ARE INVOLVED (AND THEY ARE PROBABLY MINIMAL) IN ATTENDING GDR-SPONSORED EVENTS. THIS CONCERN HAS THUS BEEN MET, AS HAS THE NEED FOR COORDINATION AMONG THE ALLIES.
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REMAINING ARE (1) OUR DESIRE TO ENSURE RECOGNITION OF THE US CONTRIBUTION IN WORLD WAR II, AND (2) THE NEED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRY

INVOLVED. THE GDR OBVIOUSLY WOULD LIKE TO SEE US IN ATTENDANCE AT THE CEREMONIES ADVERTISED IN ITS NOTE. WITH REGARD TO RECOGNITION OF US (AND ALSO FRENCH AND BRITISH) CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WAR, WE SHOULD CONSIDER REGISTERING OUR VIEWS WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE MFA PRIOR TO MAY 7.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

THE FOLLOWING COURSE OF ACTION WOULD IN THE EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT SERVE OUR INTERESTS IN LIGHT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS:

(A) THE US EMBASSY SHOULD BE PREPARED TO BE REPRESENTED AT GDR-SPONSORED OCCASIONS, AND AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY RECEPTION. (THERE IS CLEARLY NO NEED TO ATTEND THE FDJ WREATH LAYING CEREMONY ON MAY 7.)

(B) ATTENDANCE AT THESE EVENTS WOULD BE AT THE LEVEL OF THE AMBASSADOR OR DCM (SUBJECT OF COURSE TO AMBASSADOR COOPER'S VIEW OF THIS MATTER GENERALLY AND OF THESE EVENTS INDIVIDUALLY), EXCEPT THAT AT THE SPEECH-MAKING OCCASION ON MAY 7 ATTENDANCE WOULD BE BY THE POLITICAL OFFICER.

8. THE RATIONALE FOR THE FOREGOING, BEYOND WHAT THE EMBASSY PERCEIVES AS THE DESIRABILITY OF REMAINING IN STEP WITH THE FRG AND OTHER ALLIES, IS THAT THE US HAS ALREADY ATTENDED A TREPTOW WREATH LAYING CEREMONY UNDER GDR SPONSORSHIP AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL ON THE OCCASION OF THE 56TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOVIET ARMY (BERLIN 5245 AND STATE 36868). WHEN THE GDR SPONSORED A CELEBRATION IN THE OPERA HOUSE OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF HUNGARY, THE EMBASSY DECIDED IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO BE REPRESENTED BY THE POLITICAL OFFICER. (BERLIN 5461 AND STATE 71294). THIS DISTINCTION IN LEVELS OF ATTENDANCE AT V-E DAY CEREMONIES WOULD SIGNAL OUR RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE PROPRIETY OF GDR SPONSORSHIP,
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WITHOUT ENGAGING US IN A BOYCOTT. A SOVIET EMBASSY
RECEPTION WOULD SEEM TO PRESENT NO DIFFICULTY.

9. THE DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED TO PROVIDE THE EMBASSY
FURTHER GUIDANCE BEFORE APRIL 28, IF POSSIBLE, SO THAT
OUR RESPONSE TO THE MFA NOTE WILL BE PROMPT AND
SIMULTANEOUS WITH THE RESPONSES OF OUR ALLIES.

10. PLEASE BRING THIS MESSAGE AND ITS REFERENCES TO THE
ATTENTION OF AMBASSADOR COOPER SO THAT HE MAY PROVIDE
HIS VIEWS. GROVE

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